

Family Times Three

by 2028

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Summary: This story revolves mainly around introducing Colby's sisters. Spoilers for the Janus List and Trust Metric. This is not a sad fanfiction; it is more lighthearted. I felt Colby and David needed more background, so I made some family for them. I do not own any of the characters from Numb3rs, but Andrea, Brooke and Claire Granger are my original characters.

1. Exhausted

I do not own any of the characters from Numb3rs, but Andrea, Brooke and Claire Granger are my original characters.

David and Colby leave the bullpen. Seriously the cases lately had been ridiculously confusing and complicated, unlike any they had ever seen. Even the brilliant genius Charlie had, at times, stared at the supposedly helpful bulletin board and scratched his head. There were too many variables, he would say or not enough confirmed data. The cases puzzled everyone for a week until Megan simply profiled the guy...and ran a national search with that description...and got a hitâ€¦ _if only we had thought to do that sooner_, Colby thought _maybe I would have not spend the last two nights rereading reports and overanalyzing witness statements._ Finally after the perp had been arrested, booked and the concession was signed.

"Hey at least this case had almost no field work, so we were actually able to finish the paperwork on time" said David

"Yea I hope Don and the director do not expect that all the time now", Colby said just before he cracked a huge yawn. David, who was only slightly less tired than him, offered to drive Colby home, seriously concerned the man would fall asleep before he reached his apartment. David hurried to collect the rest of his belongings from his desk and meet Colby back at the stairs, where he was leaning against the wall...asleep. _Yup good thing I am driving_ David thought. He tapped Colby on the shoulder to wake him up...only to see

his partner jerk awake and trip down the first five stairs, roll onto his side and finish tumbling down the staircase.

"Colby" David yelled as he raced down the stairs. He reached his partner, worried the man might have hit his head, but Colby just groaned and pulled himself into a sitting position against the wall. He opened his eyes and answered the unspoken question

"David I did not hit my head...but I think I did a fair job of cracking half my ribs"

David took that under consideration and asked "What about your leg, it looks a little strange".

Colby looked down at his leg. _I can not believe I fell down a staircase, that is just stupid_. Now that David mentioned it, his leg did look strange. Not like bone sticking out it strange. There was no blood, which he supposed was a good sign, but his leg looked a little twisted, like some very poorly done special effect in a very poorly directed horror movie.

"You are going to the hospital and getting that leg x-rayed and there is absolutely no way I am letting you out of it". Colby looked at David's face and saw resolute there. Okay maybe a slightly twisted leg was a bad thing.

" Are you sure you are not just overreacting?"

The shocked expression David gave him told him, no David was not overreacting and perhaps Colby was underreacting.

"My friend, you obviously have a broken leg here and that needs treatment right away. I am not asking here. And since you are so wonderful at hiding injuries, I need someone who actually knows what they are doing to look at your ribs and make sure you did not break any of them"

"Knew I should have kept the question to myself"

"So how are we going to do this? I guess you will insist I do not need to call an ambulance.." David stopped at Colby's nod "So what we just walk out of here?"

"Yes"

"And how do you propose we do that, considering you can not walk on your own".

"I could try" Colby said, using the wall to push himself to a semi standing position, before gravity decided it still existed and dragged him back down to the floor.

"Now that you have proven to yourself that you are not going anywhere on your own power, will you let me go get Don, so we can take you to a hospital?"

"Yes, but only because I am too tired to continue arguing with you".

David ran back up the stairs and found Don, still sitting at his

desk, working. _I swear this man never gets tired. It is like working with the world's strictest energizer bunny. _

"Hey David" started Don " I thought you were driving Colby home".

"I was, except he fell asleep waiting for me at the staircase, and...fell down about 6 stairs and ...we think broke some ribs and one of his legs" and also because he is Colby he refuses to let me call an ambulance come to get him, meaning I will have to drive him, which I do not actually mind doing because you know we are partners and partners you know help each other out when they are injured because that is just what partners" "

"David" Don cut him off, knowing that David would ramble on for hours, because after a certain point of exhaustion his mind just shut down and apparently they had reached that point "Come on we are going to the hospital. Show me where Colby fell". When David did not follow him, Don rolled his eyes and grabbed David's arm to pull himself along. _I really need to make sure my people get more sleep or one of us is going to get killed._

David finally refocused and lead Don to the staircase, where Colby had managed to pull himself into a sitting position against the wall. His eyes were closed and Don immediately worried about him having a severe head injury, but when he kneel down next to Colby and shook his arm, Colby's eyes opened, they just looked a little blank.

"Hey Colby" Don begun "we are going to take you to the hospital so someone can x-ray your leg".

Colby opened his eyes to see Don kneeling next to him, with his arm on Colby's arm. _I do not remembering him getting here._ He nodded at whatever Don was saying, and let his eyes slid closed again. _At least we will get some time off after this _was his last thought.

Don felt many emotions at this point: pissed because one of his men was injured, relieved it was a relatively minor injury, at least compared to the alternative, guilt because he let they work so long without a break, anger with them for not taking a break earlier, but most of all wariness at the still very long ordeal that awaited him before he could take a nap.

Feeling like much a dad with two sleeping toddlers, Don pulled Colby to his feet, well one foot, as when he started to move Colby, his eyes popped opened and he groaned the pain. Finally, Don managed to lean him against the wall, balanced on his right leg with his left curled off the ground.

"Okay here we go. David get on the other side of Colby, so he does not have to put weight on his left leg. Come on David" he snapped when David took a second too long to respond. He slid Colby's arm over his shoulder and shifted his weight so he was sorta, awkwardly half carrying Colby and David was kinda supporting his left side.

The walk to the parking lot felt ten miles along, even though it was probably about a hundred yards. Don lead them to Colby's SUV, as it was closest to the door they had come out of and yanked the keys off Colby's belt. He unlocked the door. All of this happened with very

little protest from Colby and David.

After Don gently sat Colby in the back seat and maneuvered the driver's seat so he was not crushing Colby's leg and after he had shoved David into the seat next to Colby, because he had not moved on his own, Don finally started the car.

The drive was relatively quiet and Don pulled up to the ER entrance about 20 minutes later. _Literally the only advantage of working all night: no traffic. _

The ER nurse spotted the man walk into the ER and walked over to talk to him. "Hello sir, can I help you?"

"Yes, my friend Colby I think he has a broken leg". He motioned for her to follow him out to his car, which was sitting right in the entrance of the ER. Seeing the odd angle of the man's leg and the fact that he appeared to be passed out, she yelled back into the ER "Hey Susan, we need some help out here".

Dr. Susan Anderson, the on call ER doctor, ran out with a gurney and with Don and the first nurse's help, managed to transfer Colby and wheel the gurney inside. He had awoken up during that time and looked very confused.

_Okay where I am now? How do people keep moving me and I do not notice? I really need to get more sleep and possibly ask someone to check to see if I have a concussion. _

The doctor ordered Don to wait in the waiting room, saying she would come find him after she set Colby's leg. Don walked in that direction before remembering that David was not with him. Don changed direction and walked back out to his car. Deciding it was best not to block all the incoming ambulances, he woke up David, who had fallen asleep on the ride and told him to wait for the doctor to come back.

"Please try to stay awake until she does" Don asked, just a tad annoyed at having to solve this problem all by himself.

He moved the car and returned to find David slumped in a chair, once again sleeping.

I am fighting a losing battle he thought.

After sitting there staring at the ceiling tiles for almost an hour, the doctor came back.

"So Colby does have a broken leg, which I have set. I expect it to heal nicely and after about 2 months, he will be back to normal. Ribs 4 and 5 on his left side are broken and I tapped them so he does not move them too much while he is recovering. He does have a concussion, despite him adamantly refusing he hit his head. I am slightly concerned about him because he keeps losing unconsciousness and we prefer to wake up concussion patients every couple hours".

"I do not think he is losing consciousness, I think he is just exhausted. We are FBI agents and we spend the last 72 hours working 24/7 to catch a murder. He has not really slept for about 3 days".

"Are you his boss?" The doctor asked, with an expression of disapproval on her face.

Don, slightly nervous at what she would say, answered "Yes".

"You need to make such your agents get more sleep. It is unacceptable that they work under those conditions".

"Finally someone agrees with me" mumbled David as he woke up.

"Doctorâ€|" "Anderson" she supplied "This Agent Sinclair, Agent Granger's partner andâ€|"he trailed off realizing he had not introduced himself "and I am Agent Eppes".

"While Agent Eppes, I keeping Agent Granger for two days to monitor his concussion and make sure the swelling decreases on his leg, before I let him go home. He needs someone with him for about 3 days after that, so you people can work that out".

She walked away, leaving David and Colby standing there, slightly confused as to what to do next. Finally Don approached the nurse's station and asked for Colby's room number.

He and David walked to his room and on the way Don thought _I need to call his family. I wonder how they will take this_. While it is not a serious injury it is still protocol to inform the family. _Well that can wait until I get some sleep. Do not want to fall asleep on the phone._

2. Personal

After David and Don spend the night sleeping on the couch in Colby's, under the guise of waiting for him to wake up, Don returned to the office to track down phone numbers for Colby's family.

He walked down to HR. "Hey Pete, I need Colby Granger's personal file, please". After getting the file, he noticed it seemed unusually thick. He opened it to find a bunch of information about Colby's injuries from his undercover work. Not wanting to relive those days, Don quickly flipped to the section on Family Contacts and found the following information:

Father: deceased.

Mother: deceased.

Siblings:

Sister Andrea Granger. Employed at Grant Elementary school in Idaho. phone number (515) 800-9909.

Sister Brooke Granger. Employed at Grant Elementary school in Idaho. phone number (515) 800-9901.

Sister Claire Granger. Employed at Grant Elementary school in Idaho. phone number (515) 800-9902.

_Well I did not know Colby had three sisters. Wonder if they are as

bad as Charlie was.__

Starting at the top of the list, Don called Andrea first. It was already ringing before Don remembered about the time difference. _Well, hope I am not calling the middle of the night._

"Hello. Granger Residence" he heard on the other of the line.

"Yes, hello. This is Agent Don Eppes. I am Colby Granger's lead agent".

"Don? Colby has told us about the whole team. You are Charlie's brother, right?". _Am I ever going to escape that title?_ Don thought.

"Yes. I need to talk to you about Colby, though"

"Oh, he is okay, right?" Before he could answer, he heard her yell "Brooke, Claire, it's the FBI"

Within seconds he was confronted with three women questioning the status of their brother.

"Okay. Colby is in the hospital, but it is not life threatening. The doctor said he can go home in a few days".

They calmed down considerably after hearing that, but one of them asked "What happened?"

"He fell down a flight of stairs and broke one of his legs and a couple ribs"

"That is so like our little brother. He could never resist jumping out of a tree or one time the roof, or tripping over his own feet".

Don laughed. Colby talked about his father briefly, but never mentioned his sisters. _I wonder why._

"You are wondering right about now why you have never heard about us, right? Colby was always worried that people would either hurt us if they knew or that we would spill all his embarrassing stories to everyone we met".

"So" continued another sister " we have never met any of his work friends".

"But now we can" continued the last sister. "He is in the hospital; that is the perfect excuse to fly out there and see him".

"Yes, well that might be nice. He can not be left alone for the first couple days after he is released" said Don.

"Okay well, we will be there as soon as we convince our boss to give us time off work".

3. Sisters

Don returned to the hospital to check on his agents. The whole team

had been given a few days off because they were so drained after the last case and the director had found about Colby's injuries.

David woke up and briefly wondered why he was in a hospital room. O_h right, my partner fell down a staircase. I really hope we at least get a day off for his trouble. _He noticed that Colby had opened his eyes and was staring at David, waiting for him to tell him what was going on.

"You fell down the stairsâ€¦!" "I remember that" Colby interrupted "Yes, well, now you are in the hospital because you do have a...I actually I do not know. I fell asleep when the doctor was talking to Don".

"Well read my chart. It should be on the end of the bed".

David stood and found a clipboard attached the foot of the bed.

"Simple fracture of the left leg. No permanent damage anticipated. Cast set at 1:30 on Friday October 14th. Ribs 4 and 5 are cleanly broken. Again not permanent damage. Maybe restrict movement for two to three weeks. Patient has a Grade 2 concussion. Will stay in the hospital for 2 days and then he will be released on the condition that someone remain with him" David read, word for word.

"Well that answers, pretty much all my questions. I do not want to stay it he hospital for two days, though" said Colby.

"Hey. I am pretty sure you not are supposed to be reading that" commented Don as he entered the room.

"Well, seeing as David could not remember that was wrong with me, I think the staff will forgive us".

"Yea tell me we are getting some time off after this" said David.

"We! You are not injured; why do you need time off?" exclaimed Colby.

"I have not slept in about 2 days either" replied David.

"Must two you argue so early in the morning? And yes, David to answer your question, the whole team has the next three days off, except Colby who will be at home, until a doctor clears him" said Don.

"Which one you will be volunteering to hang out with me until someone lets me go back to the office?" Colby asked.

Before David got volunteer Don spoke up "Neither of us. I called your sisters. They are coming out to see you and I expect they will want to stay with you".

"You have sisters?" "Seriously you called my sisters?" exclaimed David and Colby at the same time.

"Don, why did you have to that? It is dangerous to have all three of them around at the same time; for them and me".

"Are you afraid of your sisters, Granger?" David teased.

"Not scared for me, scared for them. This is LA, I arrest lots of people and I bet a lot of them would love to get me back by hurting one of my sisters. I just really just wanted to keep my family out of my work life, especially after I got held hostage last year and ruined the whole team dynamic".

"That doesn't really make sense Colby. How does you messing up the team dynamic, which we have forgiven you for, even though it was not your fault, relate to protecting your sisters? And that does not explain why you did not tell us about your sisters. We are not going to hurt them".

"You might change your pace after you meet them. The three of them are a lot to handle at one time" replied Colby, not really answering Don's question, which both David and Don noticed but decided not to comment on.

"Well I think we can handle the challenge. They can not be much more work than Charlie was as a kid" explained Don.

"I am also interested to meet them. Seeing as I do not have any siblings, I find your interactions very interesting" said David.

"Well glad we were able to provide you with some entertainment David. What do you think, we were put on Earth solely for your amusement?" asked Colby, but without any real heat behind his statement. Don and David could tell he was fading fast now. Honestly, how can a man on such good painkillers be expected to stay awake so long?

David and Don left, with Don checking his phone and noticing with mild shock that the Granger sisters were calling him back. Perhaps with information about their flight.

"Hello" he answered, putting it on speaker so David could meet his partner's sisters too. By this time they had reached the car that Don had driven over and were sitting in the parking lot.

"Hello, Agent Eppes, err it is okay if I call you Don? My brother never calls you guys by your proper titles and addressing you that way feels strange, to say the least" she stated. Don was a little taken aback by her directness, but also liked that she did not beat the bush around. Some people can be so long winded.

"Don works for me. Also by the way I have Colby's partner here D..."

"David" she interrupted "Colby said you and he are best friends and he pretty much freaked out when you thought he was a spy, which by the way I am still a tad angry about".

"Brooke" another woman whined "You realize this is why we are never allowed to speak to Colby's work friends, right? Because we say the wrong things and we, you especially, tend to make things quite awkward for him. Remember when you..."

"And we are so not talking about that right now! So Don and David how

is our brother? Trying to get out of the hospital already? Yea he could never sit still, he could?" she answered before Don or Colby get a word in edgewise.

"So anyway you are wondering when we are getting in, right? Okay so we booked a flight that leaves in about an hour and takes about three hours to get to LA and with the time difference, I estimate we should need someone to pick us up at LAX in about four and a half hours".

"Yes and did you note that she asked if someone could come get us? We really hate taxis. There was this one timeâ€|"

"And again Brooke with the oversharing. At least wait until we have meet them in person to scare them off" snapped Claire.

"So yea, anyway. We are flying on the Alaskan Airlines. Do not ask me why the Alaskan airlines fly flights over the Midwest, I do not know. Lastly, I am excited to meet you guys, but we still need to get ready to leave and find someone to watch our cats, so bye" she nearly screamed to be heard over the constant arguing of her other two sisters.

"Wow. How did Colby grow up with them? They sound...very high strung".

"David you have to realize siblings bicker constantly, especially if they are close, because they love each other" Don said, laughing at the shocked expression on David's face.

4. Triplets

"Finally we can meet all our brother's friends. I think that is part of the reason he took the job in LA; we cannot visit every weekend if he lives so far away".

"Oh come off it Andrea. We all know he wanted out of the small towns, that we just love".

"Okay my two lovely sisters, we need to go. Kitty is driving us to the airport and watching our cats. I managed to get a lot done while you were fighting. About what I do not want to know".

"Okay come on, Claire you and I both know you love having to take care of us. That is why you never forced us to move out of your house. You love being able to control our lives. And personally, as long you as keep the freezer stocked with ice cream, I am happy to let you" Brooke said to her sister, while grabbing her bag and throwing it in the back of Kitty's car.

"Yea that is the reason I keep you around" Claire protested, but all three of them knew they would all be much too lonely if they lived separately. The thought of living alone, without someone to constantly bother them, was much too freaky.

"You guys are really a piece of work. Try to tone it down a bit when you meet Colby's coworkers or they might just have the pilot bring you back home without letting you see Colby".

"Oh Kitty, my dearest friend, if I want to see my little brother, no one is getting in my way" replied Andrea.

"Well here we are. The one advantage of living in such a small town; everything is literally two seconds away"

"Bye Kitty" all three sisters called at once "Thanks for the ride. You are the best. Do not let our beloved cats starve in our absence".

They boarded the plane and sat all three in the same row, because damn if any one dare split them up now.

* * *

><p>Don arrived in the airport parking lot about four hours later, a little early, but he would rather wait a few minutes, then have Colby's sisters running around LA alone. I do not want to think about the trouble they might be able to cause.

David, who was sitting next to Don in the passenger's seat, was having thoughts along similar lines.

Glancing over at David, Don thought _It is really a miracle Colby even managed to stay awake as long as he did between the combined exhaust and the painkillers they have him on. I would not be surprised if they both slept for the next two days. _

Finally after, sitting in the car until exactly five minutes after the Granger sisters' flight arrived, Don shook David's shoulder saying "Come on, let's go see if our Granger looks like the other Grangers".

David sorta laughed at that which Don considered an accomplished.

The two agents found the sisters milling around baggage claim.

"Hi, Andrea, Brooke and Claire. I am Don Eppes and this is David Sinc.."

"Who is even cuter in person" said, well, one of the sisters.

They all looked exactly the same. Like down to the last freckle. Their hair was the same style, the same length, the exact same color, a pretty, natural looking light brown. All three of them had bright blue eyes between three identical sets of purple glasses. They stood in a group, all three with their hips positioned the same way, as if they all shared thoughts and were mirroring each other unconsciously. When Don had started talking they all looked at him at the same time, with the same look in their eyes, a look that was curious, but hid their worry for their brother behind a mask of humor. The sight, all in all, was slightly nerve-racking, even to two highly trained FBI agents such as themselves.

"Well, okay" Don managed to get out before he was interrupted again.

"Can we go see Colby now? I am tired of sitting and all the people on the flight were extremely rude, with their judging looks and

everything".

Maybe they noticed the strange outfits David thought _Okay that might be a touch harsh but they do look like they just walked off a farm, you know, without even you know washing their clothes first_.

"Oh you are one of those" Claire started, noticing David's glance "We do know how to dress like normal people" she said, making air quotes with her hands "And I notice you are not in your uniform either. Where are the FBI suits Colby is always complaining about having to wear?"

"Oh geez, sis, Kitty was right. They are going to toss us back on the plane right now".

"Actually no we are going toâ€¦" "Take us to see our brother, um like right now" one sister demanded. The other two stopped talking and turned slightly, as if to warn the two men about arguing with the statement.

Not again to speak again, as he was sure they would just interrupt him, Don gestured to the door and walked behind the sisters as they left the airport terminal.

"Wow, these women are scary" whispered David, not wanting to offend them, but also silently thinking they would be good at verbally beating a confession out of a suspect.

"Yea, while I agree with you, I firmly believe it would not be in our best interest to let them know that".

"Affirmative" David returned in a whisper.

5. Individual

The ride to the hospital was filled with the sisters' constant commentary. They spoke so fast, David and Don struggled to follow the conversation. They also seemed to interrupt each other almost at every turn, but it did not annoy them, they just got louder.

"Claire you do not need to" "Yes I do. They just.." "They were just doing their job, they did not mean to.." "Well it was still very rudeâ€¦" "You need to get ovâ€¦" "Look there are the fancy hotels Colby mentioned" "You realize we are not staying there right?" "Think we have any chance of seeing the La Brea Tar Pits on the way to the.." "Seriously Andrea did you read a guide book on the plane here? Why are you interested in tar pits anyway?" "Just because you think tar smells bad does not mean I have to hate it tooâ€¦"

"Hey" Don finally yelled "how you even understand the subject of conservation? You are all talking over each other".

"We.." they all replied at once "have been answered this question, many a time and to this day, no one has been able to completely figure out our brains" they trained off.

"Well possibly Colby" one replied.

"And how are we supposed to tell you apart?" asked David, sincerely curious about the answer.

"That, my cute friend, is the one of the fun things you get to figure out after you have met us" replied the same sister, David thought, who had called him cute earlier.

"Oh thank the heavens we are here. I need Colby to give us some insight" mumbled Don.

"Hey G-Man, our eyes are messed up, not our ears. Careful with the comments, dude. And I would not expect much from Colby; he loves watching people trying to figure us out".

They walked into the hospital and up to Colby's room, Don and David exchanging slightly concerned looks.

The Granger sisters lead the way down the hall, quiet for the first time since they had gotten off the plane. That silence quickly evaporated as soon as they saw their brother.

"Hey bro" one sister said walking up to him and poking Colby's cheek "Wake up".

"That has not gotten cuter as you have gotten older, B. What have I told you about poking a sleeping ex-Army Ranger?"

"That you are liable to get punched" Brooke droned in perfect harmony with Andrea and Claire, as if they had been this conversation a thousand times.

"And yet" Colby said as he opened his eyes "You continue to tempt fate. You were always the most daring of the bunch, weren't you?"

"Well I was not the one who left to go fight in a war, now was I? That was you" Brooke lightly teased her brother, leaning down to hug him.

"Careful, B, apparently he has a couple broken ribs".

David and Don looked over at her to see her studying Colby's chart with a skilled eye. Without looking up, she responded to their unspoken question. "This is not the first time he ended up in the hospital and I know he never tell us all of his injuries".

"Yea" continued the sister who must have been Andrea "Remember I was saying about him falling off the roof?"

"Stop talking while you are ahead" both the other sisters and Colby spit out at the same time.

Colby enjoyed being around his sisters. Even if they were a year older than him, they had always been extremely close. Their parents took care of them, but were slightly overwhelmed with four kids, so they became each other's support system. He grinned as he thought about all the trouble they had gotten into and how they also managed to talk their parents out of punishing Colby. _Yes my sisters, have the protecting the younger brother thing down to a science. _

The sisters were having similar thoughts. I love the ways our voices fit together, one thought, almost as if we can chose whether to be individual people or whether to conquer the world as a solid, intimidating pack of four. Most people just get thrown out in the world, alone; we have each other to tone down the scariness a bit.

6. Traitor

The next two days passed relatively quickly; the Granger siblings enjoyed catching up and most of all David and Don enjoyed going to bed early, and still sleeping until noon noon days.

"Okay" begun Brooke, when the sisters appeared in Colby's hospital on the third morning after their arrival in LA "Today, to celebrate Colby's release from prison..."

"The hospital" Claire and Andrea corrected.

"No, she had it right the first time" Colby chimed in.

"... We are going to invite all of his friends over and let them eat all the food we filled his cupboards with!" Brooke finished.

"You look incredibly pleased with yourself, B, considering I have not agreed to let the team near my apartment" deadpanned Colby. He was actually thrilled at the prospect of escaping the hospital and hanging out with his LA family outside the antiseptic filled room.

"Well, you do not have a choice in the matter. I already cracked the password on your phone and invited everyone over. They will be at your apartment in about three hours. So move your butt and get home, so we can greet them properly" she practically yelled.

"Well I would be glad to.." started Colby before Claire interrupted him "Yes I am aware you having been trying for the past two days to get out of here, but considering you have a concussion, there was no way, my little brother, that I was letting you out of here early. Also, while I disapprove of her methods" she turned to glare at Brooke "I am also excited to meet your coworkers. I am particularly interested in meeting the group of professors you keep referring to".

"Well, just be careful you do not scare them off" remarked Colby.

"We will not scare them off" said Brooke, looking insulted that he would even suggest that.

"B, you could scare the moon out of its orbit without batting an eye. Just go easy on my friends" Colby requested.

Brooke tried to hold a straight face in the response to her brother's insult, but just could not manage and all four siblings burst out laughing, Colby wincing when his ribs moved.

"Okay I asked the nurse to sign your discharge papers" and here he is now" Claire continued moving aside as the nurse handed the

clipboard to Colby for his signature, before asking who would be accepting responsibility for the concussion patient.

"I will be signing that" Claire said with a satisfied smile.

"Geez Claire. Please be a little bit more of a control freak".

Ignoring her sister's comment, she clapped her hands together and grabbed the wheelchair she had waiting at the door. Her intense look told Colby not to argue and simply go along with the coddling.

"And it is not coddling. I know what you are thinking Colby Granger. You have a broken leg and two broken ribs, you are not crunching your way out of here or anywhere for at least a week".

"You know Claire, I will only submit to this because I love you".

"Okay Tough guy, Let's go. Brooke and Andrea grab his stuff. And we love you too, Colb".

The ride to his apartment was short, but Colby did feel as if he had been exonerated from a federal prison. He rolled down the window and smelled the semi-clean air of the LA side streets. He glanced up at the sky, narrowing his eyes when the sun exaggerated his headache, but still loving the way the heat felt on his skin.

"Okay, Colb, head back in the vehicle. Today is not that day for your best German Shepherd impression" lectured Claire as she pulled into the parking garage attached to his building.

The stair right next to the elevator provided a slight problem. "Why would you put a step up to the elevator" complained Brooke "That completely defeats the purpose of an elevator".

"Oh be quiet" Andrea said impatiently, moving the wheelchair so it banged against the curb but made it up on to the landing.

Colby grimaced as his ribs moved, but being the man he is, he refused to show his pain in public.

"Colby, there is no one down here. No need to maintain your tough G-man act. We can all see right through it" gently scolded Andrea.

Colby relaxed slightly at the words, remembering his sisters were not suspects in an investigation and he did not have to maintain a facade in front of them.

They entered the apartment and Colby was shocked at how different it looked. He sniffed the air.

"Claire please tell me you did not paint my apartment in my absence".

"Well that color you had in here was just horrible" she stated, looking a little smug.

"It was" agreed Andrea and Brooke.

"Well, I actually hated that color myself, so I am not that upset, but how be you find a crew to do the work so fast?"

"With the combined efforts of the Granger sisters, we could sweet talk the President into letting us have a tour of the White House" she replied smugly.

Colby looked at her. "Seriously how did you do it?"

"She promised the crew free expired textbooks from her classroom. I think they painted faster just to get away from her!" responded Andrea after Claire refused to address Colby's question.

They all heard a knock on the door and all of the sisters left Colby to his own devices to invite Charlie and Amita inside. They came bearing a dish of rice casserole looking thing. _We will see if anyone eats that, won't we? _Colby thought.

Next came David with a dish Colby recognized as pasta. He was followed closely by Megan and Larry, who had a dish of mashed cauliflower. Last was Don and Alan, who carried in a plate with crackers.

"David, my friend, you know me too well. Thank goodness you brought pasta. I am convinced my sisters are trying to kill me with their cooking".

"We are notâ€¦|" they all trained off and glared when they recognized who Colby was talking to.

"Anyone want to fill me on why the Granger sister hate me?" asked David. He addressed the room in general, but he was looking at Colby, who had managed pull himself onto the couch during the noise of people arriving.

"We" one of them started; the team still could not tell them apart "do not like you because" they spoke as one and slowly walked towards David as they spoke "you hurt our brother".

Two of them looked angrily at him as the last sister continued to talk "You actually believed he could be a spy. Seriously? _Seriously?_" Flames filled her eyes, like someone had threw gasoline on a camp fire. Her voice was hard and unforgiving. Her position was stiff as if she was containing herself and trying not to hit him. Overall the effort had hairs rising on the necks of all the agents in the room.

Don got between David and Colby's sister "Look lady" he started "Claire" she snapped "Claire" Don started again "We all know your brother is not a traitor. David took a second to absorb the shock of Colby admitting to treason; he is a really convincing liar. He ultimately saved Colby's life after we found him, _without a pulse_, on that freighter. He is the reason you did not have to bury your brother last year, so BACK OFF".

Claire backed down and took a step back, shocked at the information. "You actually died?" She asked softly, turning to face Colby, who was sitting on the couch staring at the floor, looking as if he wished he could put his hands over his ears and block out the noise.

"And we have found the reason I do not tell people about my sisters. Someone always get hurt; either them or my team" he said sadly, looking from Don's still red face to the tears in the eyes of Andrea, Brooke and Claire.

Don felt slightly guilty about upsetting the Granger sisters, but hey he had to protect his family too. He motioned the rest of the team into the kitchen to let the Grangers talk it out, but David shook his head. Don understood that he needed to say his own piece to Colby's sisters.

David approached the couch, feeling as if he was about to have the most important conversation of his life. Colby caught his eye as he got closer and gestured with his head for David to sit on his right side, so Colby was in between his sisters and his partner.

"Look" David started then paused "What none of you are going to interrupt me?".

"At the present time I would appreciate it if you did not make jokes" Claire replied tightly.

"Okay. Sorry. Look, I was pissed, but mostly hurt and confused when Colby first confessed to being a spy. I had no idea he was undercover. It was like my worse nightmare all over again. When Don arrested him, it felt surreal, like it could not possibly be happening again. But Colby got back to the office and he sat in interrogation and he just laid out the entire operation. He looked detached, like a totally different person, so unlike the man who had spent two years being my partner. He talked about Dwyane and how he owned him from their time serving together. I remember thinking that Colby had chosen to betray his country, rather than turn Dwayne in; that he chose his old military buddy over the FBI, the team, his partner. Only after his confession and seeing the vacant look in his eyes did I believe him. I thought I knew him and it turns out he was just another person who I trusted and and who back stabbed me".

The four Granger siblings were hanging on his every word. Colby was shocked at David for being so honest and not covering his emotions with a witty tone and he hated himself for letting David think he betrayed him, that he had chosen someone else over their partnership, over their friendship. He could not even bring himself to be angry at David's harsh words. He felt he deserved them and David clearly needed to get it off his chest. Claire felt troubled by brother's actions but she was beginning to understand the situation. Andrea felt sorry for David; she could see the pain swimming in his eyes, the kind that built up after years of people betraying a person. Brooke wished that perhaps her normally rational sister had gotten all the facts before she let loose on David.

"Anyway, he went to prison, then he escaped and stopped Carter from killing Don. I started to doubt his confession then, but as soon as we found him on the freighter I knew was he innocent. I was letting my emotions cloud my knowledge of the situation, but then I saw him and it all snapped back into place. You are right, Claire, he could not possibly be a spy or a traitor for that matter. But, I have got to tell you, it was the worse feeling in the world, the absolute worse, looking for so long, only to find him and think we lost him before I ever got to set the record straight". David looked at them

shyly, as if he was shocked he was telling them all of this

"I am so sorry" Claire whispered "For yelling at you, but mostly for what you went through. I only heard the bare minimum and I almost lost my mind from worry. I do not even want to think about what it was like for you".

"Claire, B, Andrea, give us a minute" requested Colby. As they slip away Claire squeezed David's shoulder and Andrea and Brooke hugged Colby.

"Davidâ€¦I am sorry. You did not deserve to have me break your trust like that. You deserved better. I know it does not mean much now, but I hated keeping secrets. I resented myself for becoming the type of person who could lie so easily".

"No, Colby it does mean something now. The thing I feared most when you confessed and went to prison was that I did not know who you were, that all the things you told me were a cover; but you are still the same person. If you feel that guilty, you are not the type of person who can lie easily. That is what really mattered to me, knowing that you are the type of person who I want in my life, the type of person who chose to have me in your life. I just could not accept, I guess, that you were like the other peopleâ€¦".

"What other people, David?"

"Not now. I can not take much more of this bromance stuff. I have said my piece and you never did anything wrong to begin with, so we are good. Justâ€¦I am really glad you are not dead...You have no idea".

"Actually I do. We are partners, remember, FBI agents; being scared your family will get killed in the line of duty is pretty the job description".

"Well I would not say that what happened to you is exactly standard operating procedure, but I am reading the fine print before I sign any other contracts. I really do not remember hearing about the part where your partner goes undercover for the Chinese and almost gets killed" David joked, trying to lighten the mood.

"Well, if it makes you feel any better, all the Chinese agents know about my cover so I never have to go down that road again".

"That only makes me slightly less worried about you. You will find new ways to get injured, like falling down stairs for example. Oh, before I forget, Which one of your sisters keeps calling me cute?"

"Do not let it get to your head please. Brooke does that to just about every person she meets. That is the second reason I do not introduce her to my co workers".

The rest of the team walked out of the kitchen to see Colby and David sitting next to each other, laughing. Colby was holding his ribs while he laughed and David apparently thought that was too funny. All was well.

End
file.